Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1 - 17 are pending. Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 16 and 17 have been added. No new matter is introduced herein. Claims 9 - 15 have been withdrawn.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 and new claims 16 and 17 can be found, for example, in paragraph [0032] and figure 3D.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's finding that claim 8 includes allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and the intervening claims. Applicants have not amended claim 8 into independent form because it is submitted that the base claim is allowable for the reasons set forth below.

Claims 1 - 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Boisgontier et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,984,866). It is respectfully submitted, however, that this ground for rejection is overcome by the amendment to claim 1. In particular, Boisgontier et al. do not disclose or suggest:

> ...the groove having a height dimension and width dimension, wherein a ratio of said height dimension to said width dimension is about 1.1:1 or greater...

as required by claim 1. Basis for the amendment may be found in paragraph [0032] and in Fig. 3D. Paragraph [0032] discloses that the groove height GH may range from 0.26mm to 0.29 mm and that the groove width GW may range from 0.15mm to 0.23mm. A minimum ratio of the height dimension to the width dimension may be determined from the ratio of the minimum value of GH (0.26mm) to the maximum value of GW (0.23mm), thus providing the ratio of about 1.1:1 or greater. Similar ratios may be determined from the groove height GH range and the groove width GW range, as presented in new claims 16 and 17.

Boisgontier et al. disclose, in Fig. 8, a preformed bridge of solder placed on optical fiber 43 over a keying area 64 (Col. 12, lines 16 - 21). Fig. 8 of Boisgontier et al. shows a space provided between optical fiber 43 and preformed bridge of solder 70. Boisgontier et al. do not disclose or suggest that the ratio of a height dimension to a width dimension of the groove is about 1.1:1 or greater, as required by claim 1. In Fig. 8, Boisgontier et al., instead, clearly shows that a height of the groove of the preformed bridge strip of solder 70 is less than its width. Accordingly, Boisgontier et al. can not disclose or suggest that a height of the groove is

greater than its width. The subject invention represents an advantage over the preformed bridge of solder described in Boisgontier et al. because, in Applicants' invention, the height of the groove is greater than its width, allowing greater alignment in the vertical direction. Because the alignment of optical fiber in the vertical direction is typically more critical than its alignment in the horizontal direction, the subject invention allows greater flexibility in aligning the optical fiber in the vertical direction. Thus, Boisgontier et al. do not disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 1.

Because Boisgontier et al. do not disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 1, claim 1 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Boisgontier et al. and claims 2-6 which depend from claim 1 are also not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Boisgontier et al.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Boisgontier et al. and further in view of Enochs (U.S. Pat. No. 4,702,547). Claim 7, however, includes all of the features of claim 1 from which it depends and is patentable over Boisgontier et al. for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Enochs does not supply the deficiencies of Boisgontier et al. because it does not disclose or suggest "the groove having a height dimension and width dimension, wherein a ratio of said height dimension to said width dimension is about 1.1:1 or greater" as required by claim 1.

Enochs discloses that an optical fiber is positioned within a groove of a silicon retaining member and that "for an optical fiber which is about 125 microns in diameter, it is preferred that the groove be approximately 125 microns wide and 125 microns deep" (Col. 3, lines 56-59). Thus, Enochs does not disclose or suggest that the groove has a ratio of a height dimension to a width dimension of 1.1:1 or greater. Enochs is silent on providing a height of the groove that is greater than its width. Furthermore, silicon is not a glass but a semi-metal. The use of silicon is described in Enochs as "forming a silicon-gold alloy" (Abstract) indicates that the metallic properties of silicon are being relied upon. Thus, Enochs does not disclose or suggest the use of a glass preform, as required by claim 7.

The cited art taken singularly or in combination do not disclose or suggest the features of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 7, which includes all of the features of claim 1 from which it depends is also not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Boisgontier et al. and further in view of Enochs.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-7 and the objection of claim 8.

Respectfully submitted,

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The Director is hereby authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. 18-0350 for any additional fees, or any underpayment or credit for overpayment in connection herewith.

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July 21, 2006

Patricia C. Boccella

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